

## **7.2 MAYORAL MINUTE - BEACHES LINK AND GORE HILL FREEWAY CONNECTION ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**MEETING DATE: 14 DECEMBER 2020**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To express Council's disappointment and concern regarding the inconvenient timing of the release of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Beaches Link and Gore Hill Freeway project prior to Christmas and the lack of direct notification to Council prior to its release by Transport for NSW (TfNSW) on 9 December 2020.

### **2. DISCUSSION**

The Beaches Link and Gore Hill Freeway Connection (BL/GHFC) is a motorway project proposed by TfNSW in conjunction with the Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway Upgrade (WHT/WFU). The BL/GHFC comprises a new tunnel connection under Middle Harbour from the Warringah Freeway and Gore Hill Freeway to the Burnt Bridge Creek Deviation at Balgowlah, and Wakehurst Parkway at Killarney Heights. The project also includes a surface upgrade of Wakehurst Parkway from Seaforth to Frenchs Forest and upgrade and integration works to connect to the Gore Hill Freeway at Reserve Road, Artarmon.

The EIS for the WHT/WFU project was released in early 2020 and Council made a comprehensive submission in April 2020. Subsequent meetings were also held with the relevant TfNSW project team to reiterate and reinforce concerns raised in Council's submission, however, no proposed amendments were made to the project and it remains entirely unchanged.

The EIS for the BL/GHFC project was released on 9 December 2020. Council became aware of the release via members of the community and through the media. Direct advice, which would have been expected to have been provided by TfNSW, did not eventuate until the day after the release.

The EIS exhibition period and acceptance of submissions is open until 1 March 2021. Given the substantial amount of information in the EIS, the complexity and density of multiple document volumes and attachments, the impact of the project on our community which will require close scrutiny, the upcoming Christmas holiday period and the break in Council meetings until February 2021, Council is extremely disappointed with the timing of the release of the EIS and the period available for comment and submissions.

Council believes this is an inadequate period of time for a heavily affected community to review the EIS documents and to create and consider a submission. It has already been a very difficult year for our local communities and this additional burden during what was hoped to be a festive holiday period is most unacceptable. Even working through the holiday period, a Council submission will likely only be able to be put to the general Council meeting of 8 March 2021. Therefore, an extension of the 1 March 2021 deadline will be sought.

### **3. MOTION**

**That Council write to Transport for NSW, the Premier (The Hon. Gladys Berejiklian MP) and Minister for Transport and Roads (The Hon. Andrew Constance MP), local members The Hon Jonathan O'Dea and The Hon Anthony Roberts to:**

1. Express Council's concerns with the lack of direct notification to Council of the release of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Beaches Link and Gore Hill Freeway project;
2. Express Council's concerns with the timing of the release of the EIS immediately prior to Christmas and the inadequate length of the submission period; and
3. Request an extension of the 1 March 2021 end of exhibition deadline to allow Council and the community sufficient time to review the EIS documents and consider a submission at Council's 8 March 2021 general meeting.